HD
7304.P15
P285s
1915

PASSAIC, N. J. BOARD OF TRADE.
HOUSING COMMITTEE.

SURVEY OF HOUSING CONDITIONS
IN PASSAIC, N. J.

MARCH-MAY 1915

HD 7304.P15 P285s 1915

0236221

NLM 05012647 9

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Public Health Service
Washington, D.C.

Passaic, N. J. Board of Trade. Housing Committee

A SURVEY

of

Housing Conditions in Passaic, New Jersey

Recommendations by the
National Housing Association

Prepared
for the

HOUSING COMMITTEE

of

PASSAIC BOARD OF TRADE

by

Udetta D. Brown

March-May, 1915

HD
7304. P15
P285s
1915
c.1

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
BETHESDA 14, MD.

Let me live in my house by the side of the road
  Where the race of men go by—
They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are strong,
  Wise, foolish—so am I.
Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat,
  Or hurl the cynic's ban?
Let me live in my house by the side of the road—
  And be a friend to man.

SAM WALTER FOSS, *in the Independent.*

Presented to the
Statistical Division, Surgeon-General's Library, United States Army
Washington, D. C.
BY
The Prudential Insurance Co. of America
Newark, New Jersey

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter. Page

I. Introduction. .....

Location and Settlement.....

Growth .....

Race Elements in the Population.....

Activities .....

Industries .....

II. General Description of the Investigation.....

Method of the Survey.....

Terms Defined and Explained.....

III. Construction of Dwellings.....

Material .....

Type of House.....

Position on Lot.....

Lot Overcrowding.....

Dark and Gloomy Rooms.....

Cellars and Basements.....

Attics .....

Chapter. Page

IV. Fire Protection.....
Fire Escapes and Additional Stairways.....
Egress from Yards.....
Access to Roof.....

V. Sanitation and Maintenance.....
Water Supply and Fixtures.....
Toilet Accommodations.....
Waste Pipes and Drains.....
Out Buildings.....
Gardens .....
Collection of and Receptacles for Refuse.....

VI. Shops .....
Kinds and Location of Shops.....
Relation of Shops to Housing Conditions.....

VII. Who live in these Houses?.....
Nationalities .....
Colonies .....
Habits and Customs.....
Overcrowding .....

VIII. Summary .....
Good Conditions .....
Bad Conditions .....
Time for Immediate Action.....

IX. Recommendations .....

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

Location and Early Settlement: About 100 years before the Revolution, the Dutch first came to settle in what is now known as Passaic. Part of the land, later called "Dundee Island" was bought from the Indians as early as 1678, and the title to the purchase was secured from the proprietors in 1686 with the yearly payment, on demand, of "one fatt henn." The early settlers were, for the most part, farmers who took up the agricultural lands along the river under patents from the Royal Governors. The Passaic, which was navigable to this point, afforded a means of transportation to towns and cities down the river and on the bays—so that even in those days of slow travel New York was near enough for business intercourse. At the head of navigation there grew up a hamlet about "The Landing" where the products from the neighboring farms and even from Orange County were loaded on to the boats. Except for an occasional saw or grist mill the potentialities of the river as a source of power were almost unheeded for 150 years, or more.

Growth: With the opening of good roads and finally of railroads, the use of the Passaic River for the shipment of freight ceased. The farms still stretched along the river banks, the descendants of the old Dutch settlers still tilled the fertile fields, once or twice attempts were made to use the power of the river for manufacturing purposes; but for years these attempts met with poor success. As late as 1870 there were only about 1,000 people in the village; but by then the necessary capital had been found and the river was being turned into the big power canal that was to change the whole history of Passaic. The sleepy old Dutch settlement awoke, streets were made through the old farms, roads were paved, mills hummed, and where had been scattered farm houses, sprang up a thriving industrial city. In 1873 a City Charter was obtained. Since the opening of the power canal the growth of the City has been remarkable, the population has in-

creased to 54,773 (U. S. Census, 1910). The farms have disappeared even from the edge of the city. The old Dutch strain in the population has been overwhelmed in a flood of new blood from many parts of Europe.

Race Elements in the Population: The early settlers in Passaic were of Holland birth or parentage, and for generations this Dutch strain was dominant. The recent rapid growth of the City, however, has depended largely on the influx of foreigners, so that in recent years the native element has been outnumbered by the foreign. Of the 54,773 persons counted in the Federal Census of 1910, 28,467 (52%) were foreign born and 18,209 (33.2%) native born of foreign parents, leaving only 7,563 (13.8%) white "Americans," and a meagre 1% negro.

The following table compiled from the 1910 Census shows the number of foreign born and native born of foreign parentage from each country having more than 1,000 representatives of each group in Passaic:

	Foreign Born	Native Born of Foreign Parents
Austria	8,478	3,547
Hungary	6,534	2,612
Russia	3,942	2,128
Italy	2,972	1,179
Germany	2,097	1,394
Holland	1,247	1,333
Ireland	1,079	1,426

Austrians and Hungarians together make up more than 27% of the total population, and if we include the native born children of Austrian or Hungarian parentage, more than 39% of the total population. Among these are Jews from either country, Poles from Austria, and other peoples whose native land is either Austria or Hungary. Russia has nearly 4,000 and Italy nearly 3,000 people in Passaic, Germany about 2,000 while Holland and Ireland

each has more than 1,000 representatives. It is interesting that Holland is still sending emigrants to Passaic, after more than 200 years.

Activities: The workers of the City may be divided into three groups: The largest includes all who work in the mills; the second all others locally employed as merchants, professional men or in whatever capacity; the third group consisting of the commuters who do business outside of the City.

The variety of interests of the population has affected the housing conditions to some extent. The commuters want open space and a bit of grass about their homes, they live outside of the larger cities in order to enjoy these "amenities" as the English say. On the other hand many of the merchants live in the building in which is the shop, the site is chosen from the business point of view almost entirely; great inconvenience in living conditions weighing little against good business location and facilities. The less skilled workers flock together, often in unnecessarily crowded quarters, over the shops and in the adjacent streets, choosing their homes partly because of racial affiliations—partly to be near the stores and cheap recreation.

Industries: The situation of Passaic between the markets of New York and Philadelphia, the proximity of the coal fields of Pennsylvania, and the power canal fed by the Passaic River are some of the factors which have fostered the development of manufacturing in the City. Woolen, worsteds and cotton manufacturing in their various branches are the leading industries of the City. Rubber goods, metals and other articles are also made.

Many of these mills use an abundance of little skilled labor, which is furnished by the immigrants who have flocked to the City. Women and girls are employed in great numbers in some of the mills. To supply the needs of this laboring population many shops are maintained. Indeed in "Dundee," where thousands of the "hands" live, are found stores which cater almost exclusively to this trade.

CHAPTER II.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE INVESTIGATION

Method of the Survey: The method employed in making the Survey of housing conditions in Passaic is the same as has been used in similar investigations elsewhere. Such reports have been the basis for better housing campaigns in Grand Rapids, Bridgeport and other cities.

Typical districts in the city are selected with the advice and suggestions of citizens familiar with conditions. Detailed inspections are made of every dwelling in each district and the results recorded on cards prepared for the purpose. These record cards together with other material used in compiling the report are turned into the committee with the completed Survey. The detailed inspections are supplemented by general inspections throughout the City, a study of the United States Census Report, state and local laws and ordinances affecting housing conditions, and insurance maps. A Survey compiled from these sources should indicate the good conditions found, note the present trend in recent house building, disclose the existing bad conditions, point out weak points in the laws and ordinances governing housing conditions, and suggest remedial and preventive measures.

My thanks are due to the committee for their help in opening up channels of information; to Mr. Morris, City Sanitarian, for many of the photographs; to Mr. Wise, City Engineer, for the use of maps and data; to Dr. Shepherd for school statistics and to Captain Allen, Secretary of the Board of Tenement House Supervision, for information concerning tenement houses throughout the City.

In Passaic three districts were selected for detailed investigation: The first district studied includes the whole of Aspen, Water and Dock Streets and the east side of State Street between

Park Place and Aspen Street. A blind alley extending about half the length of Aspen Street, and located between that street and Passaic Street, gives access to the barns and stables on the ends of the lots. Such alleys are not common in the City. This one is unpaved and dirty—a catch-all for ashes, rubbish and stable litter. At present there are no dwellings on the alley. There are 55 houses in the district, most of them detached wooden buildings, but with the spaces between them often so narrow that they are mere passage-ways to the rear yards. In this small district are found one-family, two-family and tenement houses. Among the latter are both old law and new law tenement houses. Some of the dwellings are well-kept, others are dilapidated, in some the tenants are clean and careful, in others they are careless and dirty. The district is a laboratory of housing conditions, but lacks the variety of nationality found among the population in the other districts. Here most of the people are Italians with several American families remaining from an earlier day. For convenience this District will be called District A in the Survey.

The second district studied includes 70 houses in the section of the City known as "Dundee." Buildings which combine a store and kitchen, but which had no bed-rooms, were not included. The 70 dwellings are located on First and Second Streets, between Passaic Street and Bergen Street, the north side of Passaic Street, the south side of Bergen Street, and both sides of Essex between First and Second Streets. Second Street and Passaic Street are business streets, lined with buildings having shops on the ground floor, dwellings above and sometimes behind the stores. The district is more densely populated than District A. There are larger tenement houses and the shops extend well into the yards of many of the houses. There is a mixed population. Jews from many countries keep most of the shops. The tenements above are occupied by mill workers, employees of the stores and casual laborers of many nationalities, including Polish, Austrian, Hungarian and Irish.

District C includes 45 houses on Bloomfield and Howe Avenues, the south side of Blain Street between Van Houten Avenue and Delaware Avenue. The District was chosen as typical of the development in the outlying and less accessible parts of the City. In such locations should be found the best accommodations within the means of the less skilled workers, and also the houses owned by men of small means, who are building their homes a little at a time and in an amateurish way.

Passaic, however, is so built out to its limits that these small, ragged houses, which usually characterize the edge of a city, are, for the most part, outside the political boundaries of Passaic. Within the City limits this district, I believe, has as good housing conditions as can be obtained by the less skilled members of the population. The two-family house predominates here, but there are also one-family and tenement houses. The houses are built on narrow lots so that the spaces between them are only a few feet in width, unless there is a vacant lot. There is more vacant land here than in either of the other districts, but this is because the houses are shallow and there are more vacant lots, more than because the lots are wider in proportion to the houses. When the district has been entirely built up, there is every evidence that there will be the same narrow passages between houses that are so much of a problem in District A.

Howe Avenue presents the problems resulting when houses are built on uncurbed and unpaved streets. The road is either muddy or dusty, and as there is no well defined sidewalk, the dirt is tracked into the houses. When windows are left open, dust is blown into the homes, and cleanliness is almost impossible. As the road never looks well cared for, there is no incentive to keeping it clean, so that papers are thrown about and chickens from the yards are allowed to wander out into the roadway. The condition of Howe Avenue is especially marked because Blaine Street, which is next to it, is well paved, curbed and has sidewalks in good repair.

The population in District C is very diverse, including American, Irish, Russians, Austrians, French and many others.

Terms Defined and Explained: Certain words used in this report are defined, for the purposes thereof, as follows:

1. A tenement house is any house or portion thereof which is rented, leased, let or hired out to be occupied or is occupied as the home or residence of three families or more, living independently of each other, and doing their cooking upon the premises, or by more than two families upon any floor, so living and cooking but having a common right in the halls, stairways, yards, water-closets or privies or some of them.

2. A two-family house is a dwelling occupied or arranged to be occupied by but two families alone. The best type of two-family house has one family on each floor and each family has a separate entrance from the street.

3. A basement is a story partly, but not more than one-half below the level of the grade.

4. A cellar is a story more than one-half below the level of the curb.

CONSTRUCTION OF DWELLINGS

CHAPTER III.

Material: The material of which buildings are constructed has a distinct bearing on the housing conditions. Danger from fire is greater in frame dwellings than in brick ones, as fire spreads from house to house and once started burns quickly in wooden buildings. Then, too, frame buildings suffer more quickly from neglect of repairs than do brick ones. In the districts inspected 70% of the buildings are of wood; the highest percentage is in District C where 42 of the 45 houses are frame (93%). Even in the closely built up section included in District B more than half of the buildings are of this highly inflammable material. A fire,

which had penetrated the walls, of the original building, would be difficult to control. The following table shows the material used in the buildings inspected in the several districts:

Material Used in Building Inspected.	Frame	Brick	Mixed and Stucco	Total
District A.....	41	13	1	55
District B.....	36	28	6	70
District C.....	42	2	1	45
Totals	119	43	8	170

Type of House: The number of one-family houses in the districts is very small. In District C, where they might be expected, there are only four such houses and one of these is a group of rooms over a stable. The two-family house predominates here, but there are enough wooden tenements and newer brick ones to indicate that the curse of the tenement house is already laid on this outlying district. On the other hand, District B, which is a closely built business section of rather rapid development, has a fair proportion of one-family dwellings and among these are several of recent construction. These dwellings are not detached small houses with enclosed yards, but one-family dwellings above the shops. Though not the best kind of one-family houses this is better than the many family tenement, affording some chance for family life and privacy. The very fact that it is the Jewish shop-keepers who are adopting these homes indicates that there is an effort to solve the problem of family life in this industrial community. Some times the effort to secure a home includes turning the dreary back yards into a garden for flowers and vegetables. But most of the women lead busy lives, filled with household duties, shop-keeping and child-rearing, which leaves little time for gardens and flowers.

In District C the two-family houses numbered 31 of the 45 dwellings inspected. These houses are so arranged that both families use the same front door, cellar and porch. Each family has its own water supply and usually its own toilet. The apart-

ments of four or five rooms are fairly well planned, and especially in the grouping of kitchen, pantry, and water-closet compartment, show a rather happy solution of a problem which is often handled in a clumsy manner.

Although there are as many two-family houses as tenements in the districts inspected, the *number of families* provided for in tenement houses is more than double the number provided for in one and two-family houses together. The following table shows this plainly:

Number of Houses of Each Type and Number of Families Provided For in Each Type in the Districts Inspected:

	One-Family		Two-Family		Tenement Houses		Total	
	Houses	Fam.	Houses	Fam.	Houses	Fam.	Houses	Fam.
District A..	7	7	*24	48	24	132	55	187
District B..	23	23	14	28	33	201	70	252
District C..	4	4	31	62	10	41	45	107
Total	34	34	69	138	67	374	170	546

*Includes one house which may have a third family living in the basement.

The tenement houses studied vary from the wooden building, housing three or four families, to four story brick barracks with four families on a floor, each apartment with many gloomy rooms.* The wretched arrangement of rooms opening one to another affording no privacy; the lack of proper light and ventilation in the over-crowded rooms is appalling; and the halls are foul from the unflushed toilets. Some of the houses were built for tenement usage; others were planned for one-family and are used for several with as little change as possible. Among the latter is a house on Dock Street. A large, rambling, wooden building, perched above grade, and side to the street. Once the comfortable home of a well-to-do family, it is now converted to a tenement barracks

*The worst of these are, of course, houses erected before the enactment of the State Tenement House Law, 1904.

for peanut venders, peddlers and factory hands. Twelve families huddle together in this one house, some with but a single room for all the activities of life. At their best these tenement houses are undesirable abodes, at their worst, they are mere dens into which human beings crawl to eat and sleep after long hours of monotonous toil.

Of the houses included in this study 39% are tenement houses, the larger ones have as many as 12 and even 14 apartments. Tenement houses provide more than 68% of all the apartments seen—more than 2-3 of the families live in little more than 1-3 of the houses. In District B where most of the biggest tenement houses are found, they average more than 6 families to a house. Comparing Passaic with the five cities next larger in size and the five next smaller (Census 1910) Passaic has with the exception of Holyoke, Mass., the greatest number of persons per house (10.7) and the greatest number of families per 100 houses, —199. In the districts studied this condition is much worse, the figures showing 321 families to every 100 houses.

	Pop.	Dwell.	Fam.	Person to a Dwell.	Person to a Fam.	Fam. to Ea. 100 Dwells.
Allentown, Pa...	51,913	11,379	11,772	4.6	4.4	103
Altoona, Pa.....	52,127	11,024	11,473	4.7	4.5	104
Wichita, Kan....	52,450	11,293	12,671	4.6	4.1	112
Covington, Ky...	53,270	9,841	12,621	5.4	4.2	128
South Bend, Ind..	53,684	11,200	12,039	4.8	4.5	107
PASSAIC, N. J..	**54,773**	**5,135**	**10,257**	**10.7**	**5.3**	**199**
Johnstown, Pa...	55,482	9,790	10,665	5.7	5.2	108
Bayonne, N. J....	55,545	6,147	10,998	9.	5.1	178
Brockton, Mass..	56,878	8,246	13,161	6.9	4.3	159
Jacksonville, Fla..	57,699	12,263	13,228	4.7	4.4	107
Holyoke, Mass...	57,730	4,841	11,265	11.9	5.1	232

As bad as the tenement house conditions are in Passaic, there is one hopeful sign. During the last few years there has been a falling off in the number of such houses built. If this signifies a

permanent change in building tendencies, Passaic may look forward to a more wholesome growth.

Since 1909 there has been a steady decline in the number of tenement houses built each year, a decline so sharp that the slight increase in the size of the houses does not nearly make up for the loss in numbers. The following table was furnished by Captain Allen of the Board of Tenement House Supervision:

	Buildings	Families	Cost
1909	111	728	$775,000
1910	87	634	618,000
1911	68	448	540,000
1912	40	269	531,000
1913	22	151	195,000
1914	13	125	159,000
Total	341	2,355	$2,618,000

Undoubtedly some of this decline reflects a slump in all kinds of buildings for resident purposes. The erection of one-family houses alone, not showing a steady decline but instead a wave dropping from 49 in 1910, to 32 in 1912 and rising again to 40 in 1914. Several elements probably entered into the large building operations of 1909 and 1910. The financial depression of 1907 was marked in most communities by almost a complete cessation in building operations for that and the following year, which in turn was followed by a quickening of building activities. It is possible that this spurt in building over-reached itself, so that the population was more than provided for. The fact that some apartments are over crowded does not disprove this, especially as overcrowded houses are found in the vicinity of partly vacant houses. The unsettled business conditions of 1914 doubtless played their part also in accentuating the decline in building activity. Only a study of the records for the next few years can show whether this decline is sporadic or continuous.

Position on Lot: When seen closely shut in by tall buildings, a rear house shows all the poor conditions of inadequate light and ventilation, but when surrounded by ample yard space there seems at first glance no evil attendant on the position of the house. But a rear house, in the sense in which I am using it, means a house not only set back on the lot but one which is behind another building. The front building hides the rear house from the street and from the view of those who pass by,—it makes a hidden retreat of the rear house, often the passage from the rear to the street is gloomy in the day-time and quite dark at night. Houses so located do not appeal to the better elements in our cities but are too often the shelter for the less desirable members of the community. While not of necessity affording poor housing conditions, they frequently present a housing problem, together with problems in delinquency and morality.

Cities which have very deep lots are burdened usually with the rear house problem, most of the lots in Passaic are not over deep so that the City has almost escaped the evils resulting from the rear house. In the districts studied only three such houses are found. One of these is in District A and will soon be removed by the vigorous enforcement of the new ordinance restricting stables, as the ground floor of the dwelling is now used for horses. The other two rear dwellings are in District B. One is a one-family house in the yard of a tenement house and may remain there for years. The other is a tenement house arranged for four families, at the present time it is half empty and one of the first floor apartments is nailed up. The house is dilapidated, the sink that is in use is without light or proper ventilation, the cellar (if the hole under the house can be called such) is damp and unpaved. The house is too close to the front house for adequate light and air. The small yard at the rear has an accumulation of old shoes, rubbish and filth. One such house as this in any community should be warning sufficient to prohibit the erection of others.

Fortunately the State Tenement House Law does much to restrict the further spread of the rear house evil. Section 113 sets forth the open spaces necessary between buildings on the same lot

when one of them is a tenement, and Section 112 absolutely prohibits the erection of two tenement houses on the same lot, if one of them is behind the other. It must be remembered, however, that the State Law deals only with houses having accommodations for three or more families, there is danger that two-family houses may become the worst sort of dwellings unless they are guarded by local ordinances in some such way as the tenement houses are by the State Law. On the whole the rear house problem in Passaic is one calling for preventive measures rather than remedy.

Lot Overcrowding: Under the present Tenement House Law certain minimum requirements for the size of yards in new tenement houses are laid down. There are, however, among the tenement houses inspected some "old law" houses which have almost no yard space. Among the worst of these are numbers 42 and 44 First Street, known as the "Ricardo Flats" or "Castle Garden."

These two buildings face each other across a short court opening to the street. The rear of each house is on one side lot line and there is only a small space between the side of each house and the rear line of the lots. Had the adjacent property been built up in the same way all the rear rooms of the houses would be dark, as it is, some of the rear windows are shut off by out buildings on the adjoining lots. In England they have the law of ancient lights which secures to any building which has stood for a few years and obtained light from adjacent property a perpetual right to such light. Here we have no such law, but we have a right to demand that each house shall be so built upon its own lot that it is adequately lighted from open spaces, either on the same lot as the house itself or from the street.

In Passaic the neglect of this principle is seen not so much in the lack of adequate yard space at the rear, but in the narrow alleys or courts betwen buildings. The State Law is lamentably weak at this point, permitting "outer courts" 2 ft. 8 in. in width. These are so narrow that they adequately light only the top floor rooms. Unfortunately while the legislature made such courts perfectly

legal they could not make the court rooms adequately light. That some builders realize that these courts do not furnish sufficient light is shown in the new houses where, in addition to the court windows, they have cut windows to well lighted rooms so as to secure more light than can be had from the court windows.

The crowding together of dwellings so as to leave insufficient space for the lighting of side windows is by no means confined to tenement houses. In District C with its 31 two-family houses, there are 20 houses of this type with one or more rooms inadequately light, because the houses are built too close together. The courts between some of the houses measure less than 3½ ft. It is the old story of the 25 ft. lot, which is not now and never was suited to detached houses, more than two rooms deep. The semi-detached house is possible on these lots, but the detached house unless very shallow requires more width of lot in order to secure sufficient light for the middle rooms. In many cases there is no thorough remedy short of demolition for the structural conditions which make gloomy rooms. The conditions are improved by cutting openings into other rooms, but this is done at a sacrifice of privacy. Many such changes have been made in old buildings in Passaic, but at the same time new buildings sanctioned by law are being erected with rooms little better than those condemned in the old dwellings. The continued and widespread practice of erecting dwellings in which some of the rooms have outside windows only to narrow courts is, I believe, the worst structural defect now tolerated in the City.

All types of dwellings should share in protection from this evil. Local ordinances should provide for adequate light and ventilation in one and two-family houses and should supplement the State Law for tenement houses until the State Law is strengthened in its provisions. It cannot be over emphasized that the difficulty of overcoming the evil in houses already constructed makes immediate action imperative unless the City is to be burdened with a population debilitated by living in rooms with insufficient light and air. It is a short-sighted policy which allows the construction of houses which will foster a sickly citizenry.

Dark and Gloomy Rooms: The prevalence of dark and gloomy rooms gives some indication of how widespread the narrow court evil is. Although not all court rooms have windows to open spaces large enough to fulfill the requirements of the present law. Among the houses inspected were some which had small enclosed shafts either triangular in shape, or long and narrow. In such enclosed courts, the air is stagnant and often foul from the refuse collected at the bottom.

Especially in District B where many of the houses were built detached and enjoyed adequate light and air via their neighbors' yards until that same neighbor built up his lot from side to side, now there are many rooms with windows within a few inches of the next house. In one such case the useless windows have been taken out and placed instead in the partition between the dark room and one which has ample light. Some few rooms on the top floors have had skylights cut into the roof, there are other rooms which would be greatly benefited by similar treatment. The Board of Health has improved some very bad conditions, by having the upper part of partitions cut away so as to improve ventilation greatly and light somewhat. This is cheaper than inserting large movable windows and has the advantage of always remaining open. On the other hand it does not improve the light as much as a large, well-placed window and the very fact that it cannot be closed means that there is no chance for even a moment of the privacy that includes silence. Dwarf partitions can be employed in places with benefit and a saving of expense, which should be considered, but there is danger that they may be used as a remedy where they are not really suited to the conditions.

Of the 170 houses inspected only 72 can be classed as having sufficient light in all rooms (exclusive of W. C. comp.). Among these are some with rooms lighted only by skylights. There are 77 houses with one or more rooms having outside windows opening only to a narrow court. The fact that many of these rooms have windows or other openings to well-lighted rooms only em-

phasizes the fact that the courts do not furnish adequate light and air. There are 30 houses with rooms having no outside window at all. Among these are some of the same houses as those included in the 77 having rooms with windows to narrow courts only. The windows opening to a hall or another room are often less than half the size of the usual outside window, at other times they are wide openings from one room to another, and do away with all privacy in either room. Some of these rooms have been made dark by the erection of buildings on the adjoining lot, others were built with inside rooms. Out in District C where there are still wide open spaces and vacant land there are four tenement houses in each of which there is one dark room. This room has a small window to the public hall and a door to the kitchen of the apartment of which it forms a part. It was in one of these rooms that a girl, sent home ill from one of the factories, was found. Her room-mate had been ill the week before and now this girl was down with the same sickness. Sick and miserable, she had gone to bed with her clothes still on, as she was accustomed to do. The door from her dark room was open into the kitchen where the landlady was busy with the week's wash: steam from the boiling clothes, the odor of soap and cooking came in through the open door. It is such instances as this that show the complexity of the problem of wholesome living. Poor housing conditions are unhygienic; ignorance and bad habits added to the bad housing conditions, drain personal energy and lower individual efficiency.

The following table shows the number and distribution of the houses having dark and gloomy rooms or all rooms light:

	All Rooms Light	Court Windows	No Outside Windows	Inadequate Windows
District A.....	29	23	3	
District B.....	25	29	23	2
District C.....	18	25	4	
Total	72	77	30	2

By "inadequate windows," as used in the table, is meant window space either so small or so placed that the light obtained does

not sufficiently light the room. One such room was found behind a drug store. It is lighted by two small round windows totally inadequate for the task of lighting a rather large room. This room was probably not intended for living purposes when built, but it was being used in conjunction with one of the up-stairs apartments when the inspection was made. The other apartment is a basement dwelling, with windows about one-half the size required to really light the room.

There is no housing evil in Passaic today which menaces the city to a greater degree than the evil of the dark and gloomy room. It is not only a difficulty which must be mitigated in buildings already constructed but it is an evil that must be prohibited in the future. No city can afford the bill for sickness, debility and inefficiency resulting from poor light and ventilation. In America we must form the habit of building each and every dwelling so that it is adequately lighted and ventilated from the street and from open spaces on the same lot as the building. Until this becomes an accepted principle in planning and building, we will continue to increase the number of unwholesome rooms in our dwellings.

Cellars and Basements: In cities built on steep hillsides the problems of cellar and basement dwellings is often one of the most difficult of solution. Other cities have a habit of building private houses with basements for use as kitchens and perhaps dining rooms, which in the process of conversion to tenement usage become separate apartments. There are in Passaic a few houses of the basement type, but fortunately the tendency has been to build cellars for storage purposes only, so that the partly underground dwelling is not a widespread problem. In the 170 houses included in the detailed study only four basement dwellings were found, with a possible fifth in which the tenant was never found at home. One other house has a kitchen in the basement which is used with the first floor rooms. This good showing is due in part, especially on State Street in District A, to the activities of the Board of Health in closing some undesirable basement rooms.

The majority of the inspections were made during a prolonged dry spell, so that it was difficult to be sure of the usual conditions of the cellars. This was especially true in District C where there was much complaint of wet cellars by the tenants, a complaint which seemed to have some foundation from the fact that a number of houses had the first floor apartment vacant. The few houses seen after a storm had damp cellars and one house had water standing in a large part of the cellar. The only satisfactory explanation for this condition is that there is a great deal of rock in this part of the city. I am sure that many of the house owners in the neighborhood would be glad to know of some method of water proofing not too expensive. Much can be done by the proper grading of the surrounding ground, carrying the rain leaders well out toward the street and making cellar windows and doors rain proof, but more than that is necessary to secure dry cellars in some of the houses in this section of the City.

The accumulation of rubbish found in some of the cellars are not only dirty but also bad from the point of fire risk. It is in such rubbish heaps that fires start easily, smolder long and then blaze up to the peril of the house and its occupants.

Attics: Many of the houses inspected have attics which are used for storage, play-rooms or for drying the clothes on wet days. Two tenement houses in District A have occupied rooms in the attic or half-story. Such rooms directly under the roof, and with low slanting ceilings, are extremely hot in summer. In one of the houses, these rooms are very much over-crowded, two beds, a stove, and all the family belongings are squeezed into the small room. The danger of fire from the proximity of bed and stove is appalling. The other house is a two-story attic and basement dwelling, converted to tenement usage. The attic is occupied by men doing their own housekeeping. The stairs from the second floor are awkward and without a proper hand-rail, nor is any fire escape provided.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRE PROTECTION

Fire Escapes and Additional Stairways: The effect on health of dark and gloomy rooms and damp cellars is comparatively slow and not obvious to the less intelligent elements in the population. The injuries and deaths from fire are immediate and spectacular. Perhaps it is for this reason that better results are obtained in procuring fire escapes and additional stairways, than in remedying and preventing unwholesome rooms and cellars. Also it is usually easier to affix fire escapes to a completed building than it is to do away with poorly lighted rooms. All of the six four-story buildings inspected have iron fire escapes as required by the State Law. In addition 37 three-story buildings are provided with iron fire escapes, these are especially necessary in the type of house which has a single inside stairway in the centre of the house and a long hallway from the stairs to the street. Indeed, every three-story tenement house should have two entirely separate stairways easily accessible to all apartments either in or out of the house.

In addition to these houses which are provided with iron fire escapes there are 26 buildings provided with wooden outside stairways of which number 18 are in addition to inside stairs. Of the 8 houses which have outside stairways only, 2 are rear buildings with one stairway for each family. The first floor apartments are not dependent on the stairs. In only 2 of the 8 houses with oustide stairs only, are as many as two families dependent on this stairway.

The fire escapes vary from an awkward iron ladder which would be useless to most people, to the best kind of modern fire-escape. In a number of instances the drop ladder is missing from the lower balcony,—one was found in the rear yard but some of the ladders have disappeared entirely.

Table Showing the Presence and Material of Outside Stairs or Ladders:

	Fire Escapes	Wooden Stairways With Inside Stairs	Wooden Stairways With no Inside Stairs	Total
Dist. A.....	14	10	6	30
Dist. B.....	27	11	2	30
Dist. C.....	2	7	0	9
Total	43	28	8	69

Egress from Yards: In addition to fire escapes and additional stairways, unobstructed exits from the yards should be maintained if the fire protection is to be complete. This is necessary in houses without fire escapes as well as in those which are equipped with outside escapes leading to the yard. These entrances to the yards are to give firemen access to the rear of the buildings, as well as to give tenants egress from the yards. Of the 170 houses studied 126 have yards with adequate and unobstructed egress. In District A, 8 of the yard exits were found obstructed. These yards are provided with gates or doors, but they are securely fastened in an effort to keep out the small boys of the neighborhood. The worst conditions are in District B, where nearly half the houses lack the necessary means of egress from the back yards. In some cases the defect could be remedied easily by cutting a door to adjoining property, in other cases the yards are very small and so surrounded by buildings that the conditions are not easily improved. In District C, with two exceptions, every yard has ample egress. Even the two instances noted as not adequate, offer no great problem, as the yards are so large that there is little fear that any one would be trapped in them near enough to a burning building to suffer and firemen would gain ready access by cutting or breaking through the wooden fences. In fact, there is more danger from the uncared for condition of the unfenced yards in this section than from too closely fenced yards. Rubbish is burned in these open spaces from time to time, which is dangerous so near frame buildings.

Access to Roof: Of the 6 four-story tenement houses included in this study, 5 have stairs and bulkheads to the roof and 1, an old building, has a ladder. These provisions are in accordance with the State Law governing these buildings. In three-story buildings stairs and a scuttle may be used, even in new buildings, instead of a bulkhead. This provision may be sufficient egress for men and boys but for women and babies it is a farce. The scuttle is frequently too heavy to be easily moved, some I could not lift although they did not seem to be fastened in any way. In addition to this objection, the approach to the scuttle is awkward and cramped under the roof. This means of exit is so impossible to many women, that none of the stair and scuttle exits were in use at the time of inspection although the bulkhead exits were often found open either for ventilation or because the roof was in use. If in the unhurried work of every-day living these exits are not used, there is little likelihood that they would be used with advantage in the hurried excitement of a fire.

The inspection showed that the present law in regard to fire escapes and roof access is being well enforced. It also showed that the weak poins in the present situation are: first, the lack of proper egress from the yards, and second, that the section of the State Law permitting scuttles instead of bulkheads to the roof of three story buildings seems to have been framed on the supposition that all the tenants in such buildings are men and boys.

CHAPTER V.

SANITATION AND MAINTENANCE

Water Supply and Fixtures: Three factors are involved in providing a water supply consistent with the good health of a city, the quality must be good, the quantity sufficient and the location of mains and openings convenient. Passaic is fortunate in having an ample supply of pure water. There are 63.75 miles of streets in the City of which 48.20 (76%) are supplied with water

mains. Some of the streets not equipped are either not built up, or have only a few scattered dwellings, but of the 15½ miles of streets still lacking water pipes, more than half are already paved. Well water is used where city water is not available, a practice which is attended by danger from disease; and increases the burden of housekeeping because the water must be carried or pumped into the house. In the districts studied conditions are better than in the City as a whole. There is water in all the streets as far as they are built up and water in every house. The convenience of the location of the house tap is shown in the following table:

Location of Water Supply in the Dwellings Studied?

	In Aprts.	Hall or Store	Mixed	Total
Dist. A.....	54	0	1	55
Dist. B.....	62	4	4	70
Dist. C.....	45	0	0	45
Total	161	4	5	170

This is an excellent showing. In every house the supply of city water is brought into the building and in 161 of the 170 dwellings it is brought into the apartments. This means a separate water supply for every family unless families are living together. Probably the worst condition is the practice of putting running water into the store and expecting the tap to serve the family, all the employees of the shop and occasionally customers. Also all the water used by the family must be carried into the apartment or the semi-public sink in the store is used for family ablutions.

The sinks seen varied from the most up-to-date enameled fixtures to old enclosed iron ones. There is every evidence that the enclosed fixtures are relics of former conditions. Only 7 houses have these enclosed sinks, 3 in District A, 4 in District B and none in District C. Houses which have enclosed sinks, in some apartments often have open plumbing in other apartments. The enclosed plumbing is unsanitary, as light and air are shut away from the pipes and the dark, unventilated cubby under the

sink easily becomes filthy, the wood-work saturated with moisture and the cracks breeding places for vermin. Wherever the old boxing remains it should be speedily removed not only in the houses studied but throughout the City. It is not necessary to replace the present sinks if these are in good condition.

In addition to the supply of city water which is in each house, 4 houses have wells. The season was not far enough advanced at the time of the inspection to determine definitely if these wells are used, as it is not unusual to use them in the summer, even if not in the winter. In a closely built section of the City like District B, these wells should be closed. In the less crowded sections there is no need of keeping the wells open if there is city water in the houses. It is cheaper and more practicable to watch the water supply of a city when all are drawing from the same source than when there are wells in use. Two of these four houses which have wells have cisterns also and there are probably many others in the city, especially in the portions which have been built by the Hollanders. The use of rain water for washing purposes is considered by many to be an excellent practice nor can I see any objection to the arrangement so long as there is city water at least equally accessible, so there is no temptation to use the cistern water for drinking or cooking purposes.

Toilet Accommodations: No less important than the water supply, is the convenience and adequacy of the toilet accommodations. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that not only habits of decency and modesty but the health of a community as well, is bound up in this problem. Proper accommodations in a city necessitate a sewer system. In Passaic 43.88 miles of the 63.75 miles of streets have sewers. The extension of the system should at least keep pace with the extension of the water mains. In the Districts studied all the streets are sewered except Dock Street. The houses on that street are connected with the Aspen Street sewer, with one exception, which is dependent on a privy vault. Of the 170 houses studied in detail 157 had all toilets in the

house, 10 had toilets in the yard, 2 had some in the houses and some in the yards and one rear house had no accommodations except the water-closet in the front house.

The yard closets vary from privy vaults to wash down fixtures. 7 of them are hopper closets which are supposed to be frost proof, but they would have to be built more substantially than these to secure this result. At its best the hopper closet is easily soiled and difficult to clean. The sooner these closets are replaced by house closets of an approved type the better. The attempt to use wash-out and wash-down fixtures in the yard closets has met with poor success, if those seen in the course of the investigation are a fair illustration, as I believe they are. The idea of yard closets is fundamentally wrong. A properly screened and frequently cleaned privy does not freeze and may be permitted in outlying sections where sewers and city water are not available. In the more congested parts of the city such primitive arrangements cannot be permitted with safety, but the house toilet, not the yard water-closet, should be the substitute. The yard water-closet is inconvenient in location, is likely to freeze in extreme weather, and often becomes semi-public in a congested district. On Second Street there are yard water-closets of this character, the only accommodation provided for the apartments and offices or the stores in the building. The fixtures are filthy and somewhat out of repair, unless some careful tenant has secured a compartment for his own use by key and padlock.

The problems of sanitary, adequate and convenient toilets is not entirely solved by installing house fixtures. Nothing short of a separate fixture for each apartment within each apartment, will provide for family privacy and at the same time fix the responsibility for cleanliness and repair. How far the City has advanced

toward this goal and some of the problems yet to be coped with are brought out in the following table:

Location of House Toilets in the Houses Inspected:

	Apts.	Hall	Cellar	Store	Porch	Mixed	Total
Dist. A...	25	16	2	0	1	3	47
Dist. B...	36	16	0	2	0	11	65
Dist. C...	33	5	2	0	4	1	45
Total	94	37	4	2	5	15	157

The table shows that water-closets are more often found in the apartment than in all other locations combined. Hall toilets are numerous, however, especially in tenement houses built before the present State Law went into effect and under that law they are legal in the old buildings. The worst hall toilets seen are in the "Ricardo Flats." Both buildings are equipped with old hopper fixtures, located on the stair landings, half-way between floors. The compartments are without windows, the plumbing worn and twisted, the fixtures corroded and filthy, and the odor from the unsanitary closets fills the stair tower. Each closet is used by two families.

Where there are sufficient hall toilets for each family to have a separate closet and the compartment is kept locked, the fixture may be kept clean, especially if the compartment is well lighted both by day and night. But frequently these hall closets are used by two or more families, the door is left not only unlocked but open, no one feels any responsibility for either the cleanliness or the repair of the fixture and the resulting conditions are beyond description filthy. The problem is complicated by the people, who through ignorance or carelessness, make improper use of the toilet fixtures. Such semi-public accommodations not only tend to destroy habits of decency, but there is danger of spreading loathsome diseases through the common use of water-closets.

The location of water-closets in cellars is usually the result of installing house closets in buildings originally constructed for yard closets only. The cellar closet is a poor makeshift. Light and air are often insufficient but the chief objection is the inconvenience of location. Porch closets are another device used when no space has been provided for a house closet. Such compartments can have adequate light and ventilation, they can be sufficiently well built to protect the water pipes, and they are accessible. If well built, the porch closet is probably the best recourse where a water-closet within the apartment is not feasible.

Though small in number the 2 houses provided only with water-closets in the store indicate a problem which is already giving trouble and may become a widespread bad condition. These 2 dwellings which are dependent on toilets located in the adjoining stores show the reverse of a situation which jeopardizes the health of the community. This is the number of shops without any toilets. The people working in the store are dependent on accommodations in the proprietor's home, if he lives nearby, or in neighboring yards or tenement halls. Convenient access to toilet accommodations is necessary if good health is to be maintained. The present lack of accommodations is not only injurious to people who work in the stores but has a direct connection with housing conditions in the City. One element of good housing is privacy for family and individual. So long as family toilet accommodations must be accessible to the workers in the stores, or so long as there are families with no accommodations except the fixtures in the store, the privacy of family life will be infringed.

The type of fixture used in the closets is of great importance. The hopper closet is easily corroded, difficult to clean and has a large fouling surface. The wash out closet is a much better type and can be allowed to remain until worn out, the best type is the wash down closet. All new closets should be of this type and old closets when worn out or broken should be replaced by wash down closets of an approved make. Hopper closets are an anachronism in the present stage of sanitation. The remaining hopper closets

should be removed as rapidly as possible, as soon as they are slightly worn they become a nuisance whenever used and this alone is enough to condemn them. The following table shows the number of houses in each district having all house toilets and how each is equipped.

Water Closets in Houses Having No Yard Closets:

	All Hopper	All Wash Out or Wash Down	Mixed or ?	Total
Dist. A.....	6	39	2	47
Dist. B.....	5	58	2	65
Dist. C.....	2	42	1	45
Total	13	139	5	157

The wash out and the wash down closets have been classed together partly because both types of fixtures are permissible where already installed, but more because so many houses have some fixtures of one type and some of the other, the general practice being to put in wash down closets where new fixtures are required. The 13 houses which have hopper closets make a fine showing on paper,—the number is so small when compared with the total, but if you happen to live in one of the 13 houses, it is little comfort to know that few houses are as poorly equipped as your home: you are probably fully convinced that hopper closets are an abomination which should be cut out of a community which makes any claim to cleanliness and sanitation.

Waste Pipes and Drains: In some cellars it was impracticable to examine the entire length of the pipes, because heavy boxes and barrels of goods were piled from floor to ceiling. The data gathered, therefore, is not complete but it is significant in one respect. Some 16 dwellings were found to have holes, of various sizes, in one or more of the outgoing pipes. These holes have been made so that any obstructing substance can be pushed

along by means of a wire or stick. The holes may be left open if on the top of an almost horizontal pipe, otherwise they are plugged with cork or wood. Such conditions may indicate, as it surely did in one case, that the house drain has not been placed at a sufficient grade or that a bend in a pipe is too acute. It may indicate that waste for which the pipes are not intended is being forced through the fixtures. In one cellar, the man of the house exhibited his "cleaning holes" with great pride, one in the waste from the kitchen sink, another in the soil pipe, and a third in the main house drain. If there is an obstruction in the drain and the hole is open the cellar is soon flooded unless the stoppage is quickly discovered.

Out Buildings: There is probably no one factor in the housing situation which differentiates the three districts studied, more than the presence and use of the out buildings. In District A, which has almost entirely an Italian population, there are several lots used for the storage of old rags, the men who deal in these rags and other rubbish of commercial value and collect them from the householders, live in the neighboring dwellings and keep their horses and wagons in the small yard stables. There are also several Italian bakeries in this section and the bakers also need a horse and wagon for delivery purposes. It is not surprising then to find that 13 houses in this District have out buildings which are used for stables. In District C no out building is so used but one building consists of a combination of stable and dwelling. In District B only three houses have stables in the yards. In both Districts A and C chickens are kept by many of the families for their own use and possibly to occasionally sell. It is in the crowded yards of Second Street that chicken crates are piled high, or small runs are stocked with chickens for sale as live poultry. The section is too closely built up for this practice to be permitted without causing annoyance to the neighbors and creating a nuisance in the district. The odor was bad on a warm spring day, it must be well nigh intolerable in the heat of summer. It is well worth a visit to "Dundee" to see the women make their purchases in these live poultry markets. They go into the small enclosure, sometimes

picking up chicken after chicken until they find just the right one. It is even more interesting to see the street bargaining in live poultry. One unaccustomed to watching street sales in live chickens is amazed that so few of the birds escape, but if one does there is a well-directed chase for the poor animal—men and boys are accustomed to the pursuit of escaped hens, so there is really no chance for ultimate freedom.

In addition to the stables and chicken houses or yards, there are many out buildings, usually small but not always, that are used for storage. Especially if the cellar is used by the shops for the storage of their stock, small closets are placed in the yards for the use of the tenants, here they keep the bulk of the fuel supply, tools and the larger street toys of the children. Other out buildings are used as bakeries, smoke ovens, or play houses. The following table shows the number of houses with no out buildings, and the number of out buildings used in certain ways. It will be noted that the total number of out buildings is greater than the total number of dwellings having out buildings, this is to be expected as several yards contain more than one out building and they may be used for different purposes.

Number of Houses Having No Out Buildings and the Number of Houses Having Out Buildings Put to the Following Uses:

	None	Storage	Stable	Chickens	Other O. B.
Dist. A....	24	9	13	11	5
Dist. B....	22	28	3	14	6
Dist. C....	21	2	0*	18	6
Total	67	39	16	43	17

*One House consists of a stable on the ground floor and an apartment above.

Gardens: The inspections were made too early in the year to obtain very satisfactory data on the subject of gardens, espe-

cially in regard to whether the gardens are to be for flowers, vegetables or both. The result obtained is a combination of observation and hearsay evidence that can only be indicative not conclusive. District B makes very much the worst showing. 62 of the 70 houses in the district give no evidence that a garden is contemplated at all. Even after making due allowance for the fact that some of the houses have little or no yards and that others are used by the markets, this is a poor showing. Nor is this necessary, there are gardens in the district, some of them back of the shops on Second Street. Possibly with the coming of summer there will be an attempt to make good this lack of gardens by the window boxes, but this is a poor substitute for the garden in the yard. Tenement houses are not conducive to the life that includes gardening among its pleasures but gardens are sometimes found in the yards of tenement houses. On crowded Second Street there are two tenement houses with gardens in the yard. In District A there are some 6 tenement houses with gardens. Our Italian fellow citizens know the value of a garden and also the delight of one as do few other people. The amount of garden truck and the profusion of flowers they can obtain from one small yard is truly wonderful. With a little encouragement they will convert vacant lots into profitable gardens where growing plants replace unsightly rubbish or dreary waste land. Some of the women in other cities have told me that during the summer they not only fed their own families almost entirely from the gardens but that they sold vegetables also. In reckoning the return from these gardens we must remember that a dollar saved or earned is a much larger proportion of the weekly budget of the man who earns only ten or twelve dollars than of the man who is earning a larger wage.

But aside from any financial value in the yard gardens, there are other considerations. The yards are infinitely more attractive, there is less chance that rubbish and refuse will be allowed to collect in the yards and in addition the garden offers a wholesome and interesting means of recreation. Over in District C I was talking with one of the women about the garden which was already

started in the yard. "Yes," she said, "my husband works there every minute he can get away from his work. Sometimes I tell him not to stay out there so much, and he says, 'What do you want me to do, go to the corner?'"

In some cities prizes are offered for the best gardens. Financial disparity of the contestants is overcome by dividing the gardens into classes. Many of our immigrant people come to us with a love of growing things and a knowledge of gardening, which is being wasted in most of our cities. This is an asset which every community can use to advantage.

The following table indicates the status of the several districts in respect to gardening:

Probability of Gardens.

	None	Surely	Probably	Total
Dist. A.....	34	17	4	55
Dist. B.....	62	6	2	70
Dist. C.....	23	12	10	45
Total	119	35	16	170

Collection of and Receptacles for Refuse: If the cities near New York have been influenced for the worse by the New York type of house many of them have copied the larger city to their advantage in the practice of collecting refuse. Passaic is one of the cities which had adopted the plan of collecting garbage, ashes and rubbish. This is a legitimate function of city government and only by the city assuming the responsibility for the collection can systematic and thorough removal of all refuse be obtained. In all the districts studied the tenants very generally know the days for collections in their part of the City. This speaks well for the regularity of the work and for the effort to have the people co-operate with the City in the removal of refuse. In some

streets conditions indicate that the collections are not frequent enough for the density of the population, this is true especially on Second Street, where overfull barrels and boxes in great numbers are seen on the curb every day that the wagons are expected. The character of the refuse in this section of markets, and grocery stores, is such that frequent collections are essential to the maintenance of wholesome conditions.

At the present time the City does not require that the various kinds of refuse be placed in separate holders nor is there any standard receptacle required. Wooden barrels are used to a great extent. These are soon permeated with the liquids from the garbage and are usually too large to be readily handled when they are full of ashes and garbage. A smaller can, of metal, is better in that it can be cleaned thoroughly and is small enough not to injure the men who are making the collections and lifting the holders from the street to the wagons. In addition to the material and size of the receptacles there is the very important consideration of covering the refuse between collections. The almost total neglect of this aspect of the problem was especially brought to my attention during the windy weather of March; the fine dust from ashes was blown about the streets day after day to the discomfort of the citizens and the defilement of the City. Nor is this condition of open cans confined to any one section of the City, but rather it seems to be a local habit. A few years ago many people believed that it was impossible to keep garbage cans covered in our densely populated districts and especially in the tenement house sections of our cities, but several cities have undertaken the job with surprisingly good results, although somewhat vigorous measures were sometimes needed in inaugurating the new practice.

With city-wide and regular collections of garbage, there is no excuse for untidy, ash strewn yards. Even if the foreign-born women thriftily sift their ashes there is no reason that the siftings should be allowed to fall on the ground. Still less is there any excuse for heaps of garbage and ashes piled up in corners and waste paper scattered about the out premises. The proper disposal of

waste is a matter of education partly, it is also a matter of civic pride, and fortunately civic pride if once aroused and stimulated is contagious and begets improvements without the friction which is sometimes engendered by strict legal measures. Watch any street which has been recently curbed and paved and note the purely voluntary improvements made in the abutting property. Pick out a home which has a few flowers in front or a garden at the rear and the chances are that the adjacent houses will have a few flowers too. The same holds true of the interior of houses, of two built alike and perhaps owned by the same landlord one will be much cleaner than the other for no other reason than the "house spirit" which in one leads to a certain pride in clean halls and stairs, in the other results in using the halls as a dump for sweepings and rubbish. There are of course cases where the authority of the law must step in and enforce sanitary conditions, but I believe that the tremendous power of civic pride and what, for lack of a better term, may be called "house spirit", has only just begun to be employed for the betterment of living and working conditions.

CHAPTER VI.

SHOPS

Kinds and Location of Shops: Of the three districts studied the one in "Dundee" has by far the greatest number of shops. Two blocks on Second Street and one on Passaic Street, the shopping centre for that part of the City, are included in the district. In that part of the City 64 of the 70 buildings inspected have shops. In addition there are other shops which are attached to no dwelling and so were not inspected. In District A 15 of the 55 houses have shops and in District C only 2 of the buildings inspected are a combination of store and dwelling. Most of the stores are on the ground floor, occupying either the whole floor or the front part only. In District B especially in the new buildings there is

a tendency to use the front rooms on the second and sometimes even on the third floor for business offices, such as lawyers and doctors require.

The kind of shops may be roughly classified as follows:

Kinds of Shops in the Districts Inspected.

	Food	Clothing	House Furn'sh	Jewelry	Saloons	Various	Vacant	Total
Dist. A....	9	0	0	0	1	2	3	15
Dist. B....	19	27	9	5	7	11	2	80
Dist. C....	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Totals	29	28	9	5	8	13	5	*97

*In District B some buildings have two shops, so there are 80 shops in 64 buildings.

As the table shows a very large proportion of the shops deal in the necessities of life,—food and clothing. Under the heading "Various" are included one store which was used as a club and another for church purposes at the time the inspection was made, other stores in this group are a printing shop and shops selling a variety of articles such as musical instruments, games, sewing machines and sporting goods. Some stores are a combination of factory and shop. This is especially true of the bakeries and the macaroni factory in District A and of some of the women's and children's clothing stores in District B.

Relation of Shops to Housing Conditions: In addition to the shops included in the records there are some which are not included because they are not in a building with a complete dwelling. Some of these stores have a kitchen in which the family live during the day when not attending the store. These separate kitchens and the apartments behind the stores complicate the housing situation. To insist that there shall be no communication be-

tween living apartments and shops would work a hardship on many of these people who are striving to support themselves and to educate their children. At the same time there is a menace to the privacy of family life in the conditions which offer an opportunity for family life to be invaded by the shop. The danger in some of these combination business-and-living arrangements is increased by the fact that separate sinks and water closets are not provided for store and dwelling, so that either the family is dependent on the semi-public store convenience or the family accommodations must be put at the disposal of employes and occasionally even of customers.

Existing conditions are not satisfactory to those familiar with them. Business men are making inquiries regarding the law governing the installation of water closets in stores. Some speak of the inconvenience of having no toilet in the store, others complain of the necessity of giving their employes access to their homes. From either point of view the present conditions are bad. No matter how small a family is, privacy is a right; no matter how few the employes they are entitled to toilet accommodations, conveniently accessible without infringing upon the privacy of any family.

Another bad conditon sometimes seen in these dwellings back of the store, is one or more dark rooms made by partitioning off the centre of the store, so as to provide rooms in addition to those at the rear of the building. Though not frequent, the occasional instances of this practice indicate that it should be guarded against.

The combination shop-and-dwelling, though not inherently bad, tends to break down the safe-guard of family privacy, and is subject to easy alterations which result in poor living conditions.

CHAPTER VII.

WHO LIVE IN THESE HOUSES?

Nationalities: Something has already been said concerning the character of the population of Passaic, and especially of the large foreign element. The districts studied show the di-

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
BETHESDA 14, MD.

versity of the nationality that characterizes the City as a whole. Although District A shows a preponderance of Italians and second generation Italians, the other districts show a very mixed people. No effort was made to ascertain the race or nationality of all tenants, much more time and a familiarity with many languages, would be necessary to obtain information of an exactness on this subject. Frequent inquiry was made, however, with the result that one point became clear—the variety and mixture of nationalities in District C, with apartments for 107 families, the following peoples were found: American, Irish, English, Scotch, Swedish, Austrian, Italian, Russian, French, German, Polish, Negro and probably Hungarian. Some studies made by Dr. Shepherd concerning the nationalities of the school children of the City show up in strong relief the fact that there is a large foreign element and that the various peoples are not segregated. In every case both foreign born and native born of foreign parents are included in these school statistics. For instance in School No. 1 which is attended by many of the children from District A, there are 16 different nationalities; the Italians predominate, with 76.35%. Again in School No. 2 situated just out of District B there are 18 different nationalities represented, among these are Austrian, Russian, Hungarian and Slavs, in considerable numbers. School No. 4 has 24 different nationalities and the High School has 25. Looking at the problem from another angle. American, Dutch, Germans, Italians, Poles and Hebrews are found in every school in the City.

Colonies: The tendency of some of our immigrant peoples to shut themselves off from the community as a whole, to cling to their language at the expense of English, and to preserve their own customs instead of adopting American methods has created a difficult problem in some of our cities. At the same time it has restricted the opportunities of the younger generation, not only financially but in education and recreation.

At present there is little evidence that Passaic is to be burdened with this aspect of the immigrant problem. The Italians, who are somewhat shut off in District A are not living a segregat-

ed life. Many of the children attend the public schools and their fellow countrymen are scattered throughout the city so that there is little danger that this group will be isolated. Furthermore the Italian is usually eager to become American and is interested in our ways and habits. It is the more stolid peoples who are given to this habit of segregation, especially if they combine with stolidness, a form of religion little followed by others in the community and one which tends to have its own schools, which draw few if any children from other nationalities. It would be well if every immigrant could have brought home to him President Wilson's words to the naturalized citizens of Philadelphia "You cannot become thorough Americans if you think of yourselves in groups. America does not consist of groups. A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has not yet become an American."

Habits and Customs: The number of different nationalities in Passaic complicates the housing problem to a considerable degree. It is possible to have houses planned and built in an excellent way, to have city officials and landlords unite to maintain them in a sanitary condition but if the tenants are ignorant, careless or heedless, conditions will be bad. This is true of one and two-family houses as well as tenement houses. The problem is more difficult to handle in tenement houses because it is more difficult to fix the responsibility and to change the habits of several families than of one or two. Dirt and filth, injured plumbing and wantonly defaced dwellings, are some of the conditions which result from abuse by the tenants. During the course of the inspection, houses were seen whose halls, cellars and yards were filthy with human excrement, in other houses it was a practice to wash the ashes in the sink instead of sifting them; in some new law tenement houses the hall walls were marked with chalk and pencil to a height reached only by older children or adults. It is habits such as these that discourage officials and landlords who are trying to better conditions. But on second thought we realize that we notice these conditions because they are exceptional, the majority of tenants do not purposely abuse the dwellings, many keep

their homes in excellent condition, and others would do so if they knew how.

That there is much poor house-keeping due to ignorance and carelessness, rather than to a lack of willingness to do better is shown over and over again. One instance will suffice as an illustration. One Saturday afternoon I visited an apartment where both the man and woman worked during the week; at the time of this visit both were home. The floor was not only dusty, but was littered with paper, a cigarette box, ashes and crumbs. While talking to the woman the man threw a dead match on the floor. "Why did you throw that on the floor?" I asked. The man looked amazed at the question, the woman explained that she had not yet swept, it was all right. The idea that trash should never be put on the floor was entirely new to both of them. Another woman frankly said she had never thought of keeping dirt off the floor, but swept several times a day to get the floor clean. Children brought up in such an environment throw papers, fruit skins, and other rubbish not only on the floor but into the streets and yards as well, they have no idea of keeping things clean. Such practices add a heavy burden to the work of housekeeping and of the City departments entrusted with the maintenance of cleanliness. It is difficult for those who have been accustomed to American living conditions for years, probably for a life time, to appreciate the number of new contrivances with which the immigrant has to cope. Frequently his life in Europe has not prepared him at all for such housing conditions as we enjoy. His need for enlightenment concerning the use of modern appointments in one of our city homes is shown in a dozen ways: Loose baskets for ashes and garbage; removing the strainer from the sink so that solid waste goes into the pipe; unflushed water closet bowls; obstructed fire escape balconies, all indicate that the immigrant mother is beset with problems for which her former experiences offer no solution. Nevertheless we need not be discouraged by the problem. There is evidence aplenty that ideas in regard to better living are beginning to reach the more intelligent elements in the population. Here is a family who has insisted upon having a par-

tition cut away so that light may reach a dark room. There an owner, living in the house himself, has spent several hundred dollars cutting skylights to the interior top floor rooms, improving the plumbing and in other ways making the house more sanitary and wholesome. In the most foreign section of Passaic are homes owned by immigrants and either built or remodelled by them, which are equipped with sanitary bath rooms. Surely this is evidence that privacy, convenience, and cleanliness are appreciated.

Overcrowding: Such inspections as were made for this report reveal little concerning the well-known extent of room overcrowding in the City. Conditions indicative of the practice were plentiful. In one apartment the investigator saw six people sleeping in one small room, three to a bed; the one small window was shut and at best opened to a narrow court. Many of the apartments were supplied with a number of folding beds to an extent that indicated that at least on certain nights when "cousins are visiting" every inch of floor space is covered by a bed. In District C some apartments were occupied by two or more families; for instance, in one I found a man and woman and baby who claimed one bedroom, and a second family who pointed out the front room as theirs. Both families used the kitchen in common, also the toilet and I could not understand if the fourth room of the apartment was used by one of these families or by other tenants.

The causes of overcrowding are complex. At present the lack of housing accommodations does not seem to be a factor in the problem in Passaic as there are vacant apartments in all the Districts. To some extent it is a problem of nationality. The high regard for family life among the Jews tends to safeguard them from the boarder and lodger evil though it does not prevent a family from crowding into too few rooms. On the other hand some of the immigrants from southern and central Europe are prone to overcrowd. The factories offer employment to large numbers of girls, among whom are many without families in this country; these girls must be provided for and the cheap, crowded, boarding house is the result. Low wages, ignorance of personal hygiene, a

desire to keep with those who speak the same language are probably contributing causes in some cases. The doubling up of two or more families is due in part to the dearth of two or three room apartments such as are quite enough for the young married couple, until the children are large enough to need separate sleeping rooms.

SUMMARY

CHAPTER VIII.

Good Conditions: The most far reaching good condition in Passaic is the water supply. Street mains are within a reasonable distance of most of the houses. Where city water is available it is usually brought not only into the house but even into the apartments.

The vigorous enforcement of the law has resulted in the substitution of water closets for privies, very generally where sewer and water connections are practicable. With few exceptions the closets are in the houses and the ratio of two families or less to each toilet is almost universal. In new buildings separate toilets within the apartments are provided in all tenement houses.

The provisions in regard to fire escapes and access to the roofs are well carried out.

The City provides for the removal of all house refuse so that the dwellings and their suroundings may be sweet and clean.

Passaic is fortunate in having few rear dwellings and almost no alleys. It is easier to restrict these developments than to cure the evils resulting from them.

Although there are basement dwellings in the City, they are not numerous and the less desirable ones have already been closed.

The many dark rooms in old buildings, which have been improved by the removal of partitions, in whole or in part, testify to the efficiency of state and local officials.

Bad Conditions: The prevalence of tenement houses is a menace to the wholesome growth of the City. Normal family life in which children grow to useful manhood is well nigh impossible in these congregate dwellings.

Gloomy rooms unfit for dwelling purposes are now constructed with legal sanction. Such rooms are numerous not only in tenement houses but in the smaller dwellings.

The practice of dividing land into lots only 25 feet wide tends to the erection of poorly lighted dwellings.

Live poultry markets are a nuisance in the closely built up sections of the City.

The lack of toilet facilities in the stores is bad in itself and leads to the infringement of family privacy.

Failure to turn dreary yards into pleasant gardens is a wasted opportunity.

The ignorant and careless housekeeping so frequently seen results in debilitated men and women and sickly children, who are a civic liability rather than an asset.

Time for Immediate Action: Structural conditions which result in housing evils in new buildings indicate that immediate action is necessary so that Passaic may be saved from the burden of more dwellings which are not wholesome homes.

The diminished immigration at the present time affords an opportunity to Americanize and assimilate the various elements in our population as we have been unable to do in some of our industrial cities in recent years. All efforts toward this end must go hand in hand with a city-wide campaign for improved sanitary conditions, clean streets and more attractive yards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Prepared by John Ihlder,
Field Secretary, National Housing Association.

It is evident from Miss Brown's description of existing conditions in Passaic that there is urgent need of setting better standards for house building and maintenance. Passaic is fortunate in that for the past eleven years its multiple dwellings (three or more families) have been built in accordance with the State tenement house law. The good effect of this law is apparent when one compares multiple dwellings erected before 1904 with those erected since. The law, however, has not been materially strengthened since its enactment, though our knowledge of what constitutes good housing, as well as housing standards in other States, has advanced. The present State law does not meet modern requirements. For instance, as Miss Brown shows, some courts in new law buildings are so narrow that it is necessary to put supplementary windows between rooms opening on courts and those opening on streets or yards. If it is necessary to supplement in this makeshift way the light and ventilation secured through courts, it is evident that the courts are inadequate.

As the multiple dwellings, erected in accordance with regulations enforced by public authorities, fall below standards they should reach, it occasions no surprise to learn that one and two family dwellings which have been quite unregulated from the housing point of view, fail even more conspicuously in important respects.

1. Evidently then Passaic should adopt a thoroughgoing

housing code applying to all dwellings. Such a code will set standards for one and two-family houses and supplement the State law for tenement houses. It is to be hoped that some day the New Jersey Legislature will enact a State housing code which will set good standards for all dwellings throughout the commonwealth. But as this day can not be promised for the immediate future Passaic, because of regard for her own well-being, should make use of all the powers she possesses to safeguard the homes of her people.

2. The good work of extending the sewer and water main systems should be pushed with vigor until every dwelling in the city has these services available *and is connected* with mains and sewer.

3. Some means should be found to control the development of suburban districts which must soon be part of the city itself so that the street, sewer and water systems will form integral parts of those of the central city. This could be done in various ways, as through annexation, the creation of a metropolitan district, the extension of the authority of certain Passaic officials over surrounding areas. It is recognized that the existence of county lines presents a serious difficulty, but not one impossible to overcome. Means should be found also whereby proper lot sizes may be secured in these suburban developments as well as within the city so that Passaic may from now on lessen the handicap imposed by the close building due to narrow lots.

4. Because of the unusually large proportion of foreign born in Passaic the city has an unusual responsibility and opportunity. These people and their children will become Americans. The kind of Americans they will become depends very largely upon what Passaic does for them in the early years of their residence here when they are still in a plastic state ready to receive lasting impressions. Passaic is doing much for the children through its public schools. But what is learned at school is often largely neutralized by what is half unconsciously learned at home. Whatever Passaic does to raise the home standards of its new citizens will

be of manifold value for it will reach every member of the family. The most effective means of raising these home standards—aside from housing regulation—is through the employment of visiting nurses who will teach the strangers American methods, introduce them to American ways. Much of the complaint of landlords against tenants is due to the fact that these people are suddenly thrown into an environment absolutely new to them and expected to use conveniences never before seen. A little training, mere calling of attention to things that to most Americans have become obvious through long use, will not only save more than it costs but will often change the alien's attitude of mind from one of suspicion to one of confidence. It is the mothers who have the most to do with setting home standards, yet because they spend so much of their time within the home they are least influenced by American life and ideals. If they are to learn the teacher must go to them.

5. It may be advisable in order to encourage the building of better types of dwellings for Passaic to organize a company upon a limited dividend basis to erect houses for wage-earners. Such a company would show what can be done on a business basis and so make more easily possible the setting of better standards.

6. Every growing American city is constantly losing heavily in depreciated land and house values due to the unnecessary invasion of good residence districts by stores, garages, tenement houses and other buildings which change their character. It will mean a great saving to Passaic and will tend to stabilize values if by ordinance it protects its residence districts against such invasion.

7. To secure the best results there must be a permanent housing committee composed of citizens who are thoroughly interested in the improvement of housing conditions. They will study the practical problems sure to arise during the coming years, aid in arousing public interest, support officials in the enforcement of housing regulations and encourage the erection of improved dwellings.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
Health, Education, and Welfare, Public Health Service
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Public Health Service
Washington, D.C.

Gaylord
PAMPHLET BINDER
Syracuse, N. Y.
Stockton, Calif.

HD 7304.P15 P285s 1915

0236221

NLM 05012647 9

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE